



UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
United States Patent and Trademark Office
Address: COMMISSIONER OF PATENTS AND TRADEMARKS
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450
www.uspto.gov

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/756,398	01/08/2001	Junming Le	0975.1005-006	7001

21005 7590 05/23/2003

HAMILTON, BROOK, SMITH & REYNOLDS, P.C.
530 VIRGINIA ROAD
P.O. BOX 9133
CONCORD, MA 01742-9133

EXAMINER

CANELLA, KAREN A

ART UNIT

PAPER NUMBER

1642

DATE MAILED: 05/23/2003

15

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No. 09/756,398	Applicant(s) Le et al
	Examiner Karen Canella	Art Unit 1642
		
<i>-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --</i>		
Period for Reply		
A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE <u>3 months</u> MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136 (a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication. - If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely. - If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication. - Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). - Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b). 		
Status		
1) <input type="checkbox"/> Responsive to communication(s) filed on _____.		
2a) <input type="checkbox"/> This action is FINAL. 2b) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> This action is non-final.		
3) <input type="checkbox"/> Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under <i>Ex parte Quayle</i> , 1935 C.D. 11; 453 O.G. 213.		
Disposition of Claims		
4) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Claim(s) <u>1, 2, 4-14, 16-19, and 21-23</u> is/are pending in the application.		
4a) Of the above, claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.		
5) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Claim(s) <u>1, 2, 4-6, 13, 14, 16-19, and 21-23</u> is/are allowed.		
6) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Claim(s) <u>7-12</u> is/are rejected.		
7) <input type="checkbox"/> Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.		
8) <input type="checkbox"/> Claims _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.		
Application Papers		
9) <input type="checkbox"/> The specification is objected to by the Examiner.		
10) <input type="checkbox"/> The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are a) <input type="checkbox"/> accepted or b) <input type="checkbox"/> objected to by the Examiner. Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).		
11) <input type="checkbox"/> The proposed drawing correction filed on _____ is: a) <input type="checkbox"/> approved b) <input type="checkbox"/> disapproved by the Examiner. If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.		
12) <input type="checkbox"/> The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.		
Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120		
13) <input type="checkbox"/> Acknowledgement is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f). a) <input type="checkbox"/> All b) <input type="checkbox"/> Some* c) <input type="checkbox"/> None of: 1. <input type="checkbox"/> Certified copies of the priority documents have been received. 2. <input type="checkbox"/> Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____. 3. <input type="checkbox"/> Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)). *See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.		
14) <input type="checkbox"/> Acknowledgement is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e). a) <input type="checkbox"/> The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.		
15) <input type="checkbox"/> Acknowledgement is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.		
Attachment(s)		
1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)		
4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). _____		
2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)		
5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)		
3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s). _____		
6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____		

Art Unit: 1642

DETAILED ACTION

1. Claims 1, 2, 4-14, 16-19 and 21-23 are pending and under consideration.
2. The rejection of claims 1, 2, 4-14, 16-19 and 21-23 under the judicially created doctrine of double patenting over claims 1-4 of U. S. Patent No. 6,277,969 is withdrawn in light of applicants terminal disclaimer.
3. The disclosure is objected to because of the following informalities: the specification claims priority to application 09/133, 119, now U.S. 6, 277,969 as a continuation. However, it is noted that the instant specification differs from the '119 specification at page 29, line 26, which has deleted the definitions for low, medium and high stringency that are present in the '119 application. Accordingly, the deletion of these definitions allows for a broader interpretation of claims drawn to a particular stringency. Thus, the instant application is a continuation-in-part of the '119 application rather than a continuation.

Appropriate correction is required.

4. The specification is objected to as failing to provide proper antecedent basis for the claimed subject matter. See 37 CFR 1.75(d)(1) and MPEP § 608.01(o). Correction of the following is required: claims 5, 6, 19, 22 and 23 rely on the physical parameters which constitute "high stringency" which are missing from the specification as filed.

5. 35 U.S.C. 101 reads as follows:

Whoever invents or discovers any new and useful process, machine, manufacture, or composition of matter, or any new and useful improvement thereof, may obtain a patent therefor, subject to the conditions and requirements of this title.

Art Unit: 1642

6. Claims 7-12 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 101 because the claimed invention is directed to non-statutory subject matter. Claims 7-12 are drawn to expression vectors comprising a nucleic acid sequence and can be construed as reading on an expression vector comprised within a human having undergone treatment comprising the administration of said claimed expression vectors. Amendment of the claims to recite "Isolated expression vectors" would overcome this rejection.

7. Claims 7-12 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, first paragraph, because the specification, while being enabling for isolated expression vectors ~~in vitro~~, does not reasonably provide enablement for expression vectors ~~in vivo~~ or ~~in situ~~. The specification does not enable any person skilled in the art to which it pertains, or with which it is most nearly connected, to make and use the invention commensurate in scope with these claims.

Claims 7-12 are drawn to expression vectors comprising the polynucleotides of the instant invention. Page 41, lines 5-9 of the specification state that "If a human is treated with a molecule of the invention, preferably the immunoglobulin is of human origin". Page 45, lines 10-14 state that preferred hosts are mammalian cells either ~~in vivo~~ or ~~in situ~~, and it is preferred that the mammalian cell is of human origin. The claims are clearly intended to encompass methods of gene therapy. However, the specification is not enabling for gene therapy. The instant specification does not teach how to overcome problems with ~~in vivo~~ delivery and expression with respect to the administration of the claimed nucleic acids or viral vectors comprising said nucleic acids. The state of the art as of the priority date sought for the instant application is that ~~in vivo~~ gene delivery is not well developed and is highly unpredictable. For instance Verma et al (Nature, 1997, Vol. 389, pp. 239-242) teach that the Achilles heel of gene therapy is gene delivery. Verma et al state that the ongoing problem is the inability to deliver genes efficiently and to obtain sustained expression (page 239, column 3). Eck et al (Gene-Based Therapy, In: The Pharmacological Basis of Therapeutics, Goodman and Gilman, Ed.s, 1996, pp. 77-101) teach that the fate of the DNA vector itself with regard to the volume of distribution, rate of clearance

Art Unit: 1642

into tissues etc., the in vivo consequences of altered gene expression and protein function, the fraction of vector taken up by the target cell population, the trafficking of the genetic material within cellular organelles, the rate of degradation of the DNA the level of mRNA produced, the stability of the mRNA produced in vivo, the amount and stability of the protein produced and the proteins compartmentalization or secretory fate within the cell are primary considerations regarding effective therapy. Eck et al state that these factors differ dramatically on the vector used, the protein being produced, and the disease being treated (Eck et al bridging pages 81-82).

As of the priority date sought, it was well known in the art how to infect or transfect cells in vitro or ex vivo with viral vectors. However, using viral vectors to deliver DNA to an organism in vivo, or using infected or transfected cells to deliver nucleic acids which encode a particular protein sequence to an organism in vivo is in the realm of gene therapy, and as of the priority date sought, highly unpredictable in view of the complexity of in vivo systems. Orkin et al state ("Report and Recommendation of the Panel to Assess the NIH Investment in Research on Gene Therapy", NIH, 1995) that as of 1995, (two years after the priority date for the instant application) clinical efficacy had not been definitively demonstrated with any gene therapy protocol (page 1, second paragraph). Orkin et al defines gene therapy as the transfer of DNA into recipient cells either ex vivo or in vivo (page 7, under the heading "Gene transfer"), thus encompassing the instant claims drawn to the administration of antigen presenting cells transfected or infected ex vivo. Orkin et al concludes that in 1995, "none of the available vector systems is entirely satisfactory, and many of the perceived advantages of vector systems have not been experimentally validated. Until progress is made in these areas, slow and erratic success in applying gene transfer methods to patients can be expected" Orkin et al comment that direct administration of DNA or DNA in liposomes is not well developed and hindered by the low efficiency of gene transfer (page 8, paragraph 5). Orkin et al teach that adequate expression of the transferred genes is essential for therapy, but that in 1995 current data regarding the level and consistency of expression of transferred genes in animal models was unknown. Orkin et al states

Art Unit: 1642

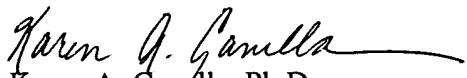
that in protocols not involving ex vivo infections/transfection, it is necessary to target the expression of the transferred genes to the appropriate tissue or cell type by means of regulatory sequences in gene transfer vectors. The specification does not teach a vector having a specific regulatory sequence which would direct the expression of the nucleic acids within the appropriate tissue type.

The specification does not remedy any of the deficiencies or the prior art with regard to gene therapy. Given the lack of any guidance from the specification on any of the above issues pointed out by Verma or Eck or Orkin. One of skill in the art would be subject to undue experimentation without reasonable expectation of success in order to practice the methods of claims.

8. All other rejections and objections as set forth in Paper No. 12 are withdrawn.

Conclusion

9. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Karen Canella whose telephone number is (703) 308-8362. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday through Friday from 8:30 am to 6:00 pm. A message may be left on the examiner's voice mail service. If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Anthony Caputa, can be reached on (703) 308-3995. Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the Group receptionist whose telephone number is (703) 308-0196.


Karen A. Canella, Ph.D.

Patent Examiner, Group 1642

May 18, 2003